'Literary legacies : children's reading and writing in the Montagu Archive'

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"Literary Legacies: Children's Reading and Writing

in the Montagu Archive"

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1. A book of gold

On her death in 1618, Elizabeth Harington Montagu, bequeathed "to my sonne Sir Henry Capell the Book of goulde which I [meante] to my daughter his wife, prayinge him to bestowe it uppon his daughter Besse"[1] Lady Montagu's gift was a deeply personal artifact: a book of devotions mounted in gold which she wore on a gold chain from her girdle. The book had been intended for her youngest daughter, Theodosia, it but passed instead to Lady Montagu's namesake after Theodosia's death at the age of 37. Bess was six years old when her mother died, and no more than ten when she received her grandmother's girdle book. The token thus memorialized Bess's mother and grandmother in a textual artifact that conveyed personal, literary, and religious legacies across generations of Montagu women.

This book is one of many that passed from Elizabeth Montagu's hands to those of her descendants, volumes inflected by the same complex blend of personal, commemorative, sacred, and secular discourses. Elizabeth Harington was the daughter of James Harington of Exton and Lucy Sidney, and the Montagus were actively engaged in the exchange of manuscripts with these literary families (Lamb, 194-226; Hughey, 1934/5 and 1960; Woodhuysen, 356-65). These exchanges were one means by which closely imbricated social and religious identities were forged: their purpose, in part, was pedagogical. While the Montagu manuscripts are invaluable sources of literary works by Sidney, Wyatt, Surrey, and others, they also form part of a body of texts and practices through which the moderate

[1] TNA PROB 11/131/760, fol. 426r; hereafter cited parenthetically by folio.

Puritanism embraced by the family passed from parents to children (Cope; Lake; Lake and Stephens). As Ann Montagu puts it, "My deare children, religion in all ages hath been ever helde to be the trewest honour. O how much more honour will it bee to you, my deare[s], if you will give god your hart now in your youth."[2]

This chapter explores the reading and writing of three generations of Montagu children who were molded by the Puritan pedagogy of their parents. Studying manuscripts and material legacies created for and by these children, I explore the use to which texts and artifacts were put to induct children into a common devotional and dynastic culture. Collectively, the Montagus exploit material legacies, including manuscripts, to convey ancestral beliefs and values to posterity. In this chapter, I focus on the literate practices of Montagu women—Elizabeth Harington Montagu, her daughter-in-law Ann Montagu, and her grand-nieces, Ellina and Frances Harington—to argue that the pedagogical potential of material forms, including the material practices of reading and writing, illuminate distinctly gendered approaches to literary cultures and childhoods.

This chapter begins by reading two letters by Elizabeth Harington Montagu's adult son, Edward, in which nostalgia for maternal instruction leads him to associate this teaching with the maternal body. This "embodied" pedagogy (Hodgson, 176) unfolds in a number of maternal surrogates that convey Lady Montagu's memory and meanings to her descendants. Next, I explore two manuscripts created for Edward Montagu's children, one offering "directions" from a father to his son and heir, and the other a mother's "guide and rule." While Edward Montagu trains his son in Christian magistracy, Ann Montagu embodies in the material text the Puritan practices of study and self-study that her work intends to teach. Finally, I uncover the gendered traces of children's reading and writing in three manuscripts that circulated among members of the Montagu-Sidney-Harington circle. Setting the literate

[2] NRO Montagu MS 3, 235, hereafter cited parenthetically by page number.

practices of Sir John Harington's two daughters within the legacy of embodiment that attends maternal teaching, I work to uncover the occluded contributions of women's reading, writing, and self-writing to the creation and maintenance of the Montagu society of saints.

2. fromenty and cheesecakes

On July 11, 1616, in Edward Montagu's fifty-fourth year, his second wife gave birth to a son and heir who shared his father's name: as Montagu would write later, "My Sonne, God of his grace gave me you in myne old age when others thought to have possessed myne estate"[3] Several weeks after the birth, Montagu composed a letter to his brother James that is framed by his perceptions of paternal duty, and his recollection of the extraordinary domestic skill and nurture provided by his own mother. He baptized his son on July 25, Montagu states, "[choosing] that day rather than the Sabbath" to accommodate the imminent arrival of King James's summer progress. "I had above half an hour's speech with [the king], hand to hand," Montagu reports, "wherein he entered into discourse of my mother and all us brethren too long to write of." When James "wondered at . . . my mother's working, being stone blind," Montagu presented him with "a fine handkerchief of my mother's hemming," a token that prompted the monarch to recall "another wonder I had told him of, that one nurse with one milk did suckle the six of us" (NRO Montagu MS 3, fols. 180v-1r.).[4]

As James's associative tale-telling suggests, the "wonder" of Elizabeth Montagu's maternal care is intertwined with her wondrous skill at embroidery. While her sewing inexplicably defies the blindness that befell her in her old age, her extraordinary foresight in providing a single nurse for her six sons is a complementary virtue. Both establish Lady

[3] NRO Montagu MS 186, article 13, fol. 1r, hereafter cited parenthetically by folio.

[4] Six sons and three daughters of Elizabeth Montagu lived to adulthood; two children died young. See Cope.

Montagu as an *exemplum* of maternal care; a "palimpsistic" figure, in Elizabeth Hodgson's phrase (165), enabling us to glimpse the pattern of maternal teaching through the maternal body. Although it was a commonplace in the period that children imbibed the mother tongue and nascent moral virtues with mother's milk, Elizabeth Montagu's exemplarity depends not on her body per se, but on her care to employ and retain one wet-nurse (despite the vagaries of early modern life and death), a provision that is seen as binding her sons to her and to each other throughout their lives (see Trubowitz, 34-65).

While the duties of the father—to his male child, to his monarch, to church and country—seem to take precedence over those of the mother in Montagu's letter, Elizabeth Montagu's prophetic young motherhood and prodigious old age predicate and permeate the patriarchal relations imagined here. The letter juxtaposes alternative, gendered pedagogies. Paternal and maternal instruction both prepare (particularly male) children to take part in the politico-religious networks comprising the early modern state. They work, however, by different means. While Edward Montagu exploits public ceremonies, from baptism to the royal progress, to forge political ties for himself and his newborn, Elizabeth Montagu's teaching is tied to her body and its surrogates. Her tutelage proceeds by and is preserved in material, embodied practices and domestic commodities. In an earlier letter to his mother, the thirty-eight-year-old Edward reverts to his childhood to describe a similarly gendered division of labor and instruction in the parental home. "I hope you will not be weary of my company in the country," he writes in advance of the wedding of Lady Montagu's youngest daughter, "for when my sister Theodosia is gone from you, you will not be well pleased unless you have some of your children with you." He invokes the domestic pastimes of his youth as those he will pursue once again:

> I may at my father's hands earn my victuals, for which I may keep him company at chess, and if need be I may take his part at double hand Irish, and if there be

> occasion of weightier matters, as punishing of rogues and such like, if it please him to employ me [it] may ease him. And to do you some service I may in the summer-time [gather aprico]ts and peaches or some like work . . . And if [none] of all these pains do deserve my meat and drink, yet truly they would be well bestowed of me . . . if I may have fromenty and cheesecakes. (NRO Montagu MS 3, fols. 73r-v)

The letter describes different gendered childhoods—not for girls as opposed to boys, but differently gendered experiences of *boyhood*. The cerebral, authoritarian activities associated with Montagu's father—games of chess and Irish switch, themselves rehearsals of the disciplinary rule of the household—contrast sharply with the fecund occupations and commodities related to his mother. Like the wet-nurse employed by Lady Montagu, frumenty and cheesecake are surrogates for the maternal body. They embody and prolong the nourishment of mother's milk and the moral instruction conveyed with it.[5]

If Elizabeth Montagu's maternal pedagogy is a matter of the body, hers is a profoundly *social* body; an acculturated feminine body whose practices and commodities perpetuate the dynastic and religious identities of her children and household. Her bequests at her death are themselves material surrogates for the lost maternal body. Texts in their own right, these tokens bear an intimacy to the body that conveys her presence to posterity. To her eldest son, Edward, she leaves "a great goulde ringe with a blonde stone in it desiring it to be as an heirloome to the house" (425r). The ring passed to Edward's eldest son in 1644 (TNA PROB 11/196/404, fol. 367r). To each of her sons, "as a mothers remembrance," Lady Montagu bequeaths "a guilte standinge cup . . . desiring that this posie maye be engraven about every of them, *Lorde give mee of that water, that I never more thirst.* John 4" (425r). When Sidney Montagu memorialized his three-year-old son, Henry, he remembered his

[5] Frumenty is a dish of hulled wheat boiled in milk sweetened with sugar and cinnamon (*OED*).

mother's gift and incorporated her "word" (425v) into her grandson's monument (see fig. 1). Like the book of gold given to the child Bess, these objects are devotional and dynastic scripts. The maternal body, its example, and its lessons live on in the tokens and texts that pass from mother to child.

[INSERT FIGURE 1]

Figure 1. William Wright (attrib.), Monument for Henry Montagu (detail).

Barnwell All Saints, Northamptonshire (1626). Author's photograph.

3. Religious and Civill carriage

The younger Edward Montagu and his three siblings, the grandchildren of Elizabeth Harington Montagu, were the recipients of a surprising number of manuscripts and printed books during their childhood and young adulthood. Collectively, these works reflect the centrality of devotional study to "the maintenance of godly sociability" (Cambers, 815). Edward Montagu's "Directions ffor his Sonne" offers fatherly advice toward crafting a Christian steward:

> You are distended of worthy auncestors. I accounted them allways my greatest Glory. So do you. And as you possesse their lands, so Imitate there vertues, and you shall be the crowne of them. (1r)

Montagu's Puritanism permeates the guidance he offers his son, dramatically departing from the political self-interest conventional in the genre (Stone, 221-2). "Travayle not too much to be Rich," he tells his son; "in your marriage, looke after goodnes Rather than goodes" (1v). "Lett Equity, the Rule of our Saviour Jeshus Christe (Matt. 7, 12) be your Rule, knowing that

with what measure soever you shall meete the same shall be measured to you agayne" (1r). The foremost authority in his son's tutelage is Solomon: thus Montagu recommends the judicious treatment of tenants, quoting Ecclesiastes' advice to "Shun altogether oppression: that maketh a wise man mad (Eccles. 7, 9)" (1r). Even at the age of four, the boy has been made familiar with Solomon's teachings. "For your Religious and Civill carriage," his father writes, "Study well Salomons workes wherein in your youth you have been well Instructed" (1v).

Throughout his "Directions," Montagu rests his advice on a combination of reading and practice, a conjunction of literary culture and paternal rule: "Read Cursorilye as many bookes as you will, but spend your Study uppon Few," he advises, while urging his son to attend "the charge [laid] uppon you, [since] it was my Father's to me" (1v). The Christian stewardship he imagines for his son would imitate his own example and those of his ancestors, guided by scriptural touchstones. When Puritan minister Joseph Bentham dedicates his *Societie of the Saints* to the younger Montagu and his three siblings a decade later, he likewise encourages the children "to imitate your virtuous Parents in their many pious and praise-worthy practices," and to join practice with knowledge: "By studious reading of this Booke, thou maist know thy selfe, and understand of what company thou art" (sig. ¶4v).

Seven years later, Ann Montagu addressed her manuscript, "Letters, Prayers, and Poems," to the same four children, whom she had raised since her marriage to their father in 1625. Now entering young adulthood, the children were the recipients of a composite work that instructed them in the tenets of moderate Puritanism to build a society of saints in the family and to confirm their enrolment in the fellowship of the godly.

Presenting the work as a mother's legacy, Ann Montagu's dedication calls upon the power of that genre to lend weight to maternal teaching, and privileges the intimate association between mother and children to support the lessons the book affords:

> My deare children I have often tymes had a desier in my harte and thoughts to write som what to you which might bee som guide or rule to walke in a holy and Christian lyfe as may bee pleasing to god and everlasting comfort to your owne soules. I heare dedicate these few words to you all as a testemony of my trew love and desier I have of your spirituall and eternall good and welfare. (235)

Adapting the example of the biblical father and son, David and Solomon, to her maternal guide, she urges her children: "O Let that exortation of david to his sonne sallomon bee ever in your minds. and thou sallomon my sonne know thou the god of thy father and serve him with a perfect hart and with a willing minde" (235). She ends her epistle with a mother's blessing and prayer, signing it "your loveing mother / Ann Mountagu" (236).

While the main portion of "Letters, Prayers, and Poems," 160 quatrains of original verse, teaches her children "a direct way to leade your life" (235), the poem is accompanied by passages copied or adapted from printed works by Puritan writers. Her "Cattychisme," for example, borrows verbatim Joseph Hall's widely-used tool for teaching the basic tenets of Christian faith in both households and churches (McQuade; and Green).[6] As Ann Montagu's voice blends with those of her sources, the manuscript embodies and enacts the literate and meditative practices, the requirements to "reed" and "practis" (236), which create the godly self. The central idea of the work is summarized in the answer to the first question posed in Hall's catechism (799): to the question, "How many things are required of a christian?" the answer is, simply, "too knowlidg and practis" (248). While "practis" is key to cementing the fellowship of the elect and confirming the predistined salvation of each member, "knowlidg" underscores the crucial role in self-examination of reading and hearing the word. Ransacking the scripture requires us, in turn, to ransack our souls. When Ann Montagu encourages her

[6] Montagu adapts Hall; Attersoll, esp. 3:202-395; and Andrews. I am indebted to Paula McQuade for her identification of Hall as source.

children to “pray, reade, lament thy sinnes” (247), the point is not to earn salvation, but to reach assurance of election and to recognize the company of the elect (see Lake, 151-68). It is, moreover, not only the individual worshipper who confirms her godliness in solitude: “masters of families” must “examine their people in their houses whether they can repeate the lords prayer or noe the creede and the ten commandements and in som measure understand and give a reason of them” (250). Ministers and masters—and mothers, Ann Montagu argues—lay the foundation of “knowlidg” from which “practis” proceeds.

Like her mother-in-law’s book of gold, Ann Montagu’s “Letters, Prayers, and Poems” exploits literary culture as a mode of cross-generational communication, using the matter of the book to forge ties between generations and to transmit the author’s rule and presence to posterity. Ann Montagu’s inscribed act of writing becomes a model for imitation by readers of her text. The adaptation of printed works to her instructional manuscript may be intended to lend authority to a woman’s work, but, more significantly, it also demonstrates the internalization of godly teaching that is her theme and purpose. This composite text calls itself to a stop repeatedly only to resume its meditation in a different genre or register. Her penultimate poem summarizes this formal strategy and encapsulates the fits and starts of Puritan meditation:

I · see · the · best · the · more · accurst ·
To · like · the · best · and · doe · the · worst ·
. . .
I · see · the · best · the · more · fault · mine ·
That · to · the · worst · doe · still · incline · (258, ll. 1-2, 11-12)

Reworking the same idea in six slightly different couplets, the speaker continually tries and fails to achieve a godly state—impossible without God’s saving grace—while the poem’s form embodies the same stalemate. The punctuation between each word imitates the halting,

stilted movement of the speaker's spiritual dilemma and forces the reader to experience the same impasse. Through deliberative, progressive acts of reading, writing, and re-writing, Ann Montagu—author, subject, and reader—embodies the fluid texture of godly teaching in her person and in her text. "Letters, Poems, and Prayers" is a palimpsest through which the exemplary maternal body teaches the Montagu children how to craft the godly self.

4. Adams Children

At the heart of the "culture of Puritanism" uniting members of the Montagu circle are exchanges, shared reading, and shared writing of books (Durston and Eales; Cambers). Among these are works which, like Elizabeth Montagu's book of gold, blend dynastic and devotional identities. Ann Montagu's idea that "religion . . . hath been ever helde to be the trewest honour" informs the manuscripts that circulated between the Montagu, Sidney, and Harington households. The descent of these works through generations prompted both reading and writing; exercises that afforded practical instruction in literacy while promoting ancestral values and spiritual lessons. As literary legacies, manuscripts are material surrogates for the absent dead, and their pedagogical and memorial purposes are incarnated in their fabric. The vellum cover of the Bright manuscript, for example, is stamped with the arms of Charles Montagu, Elizabeth Montagu's great-grandson, who joined this textual community more than a century after the miscellany was compiled.[7] Marking the book as an heirloom of the house, Charles's emblazoned arms assert inclusion and possession, while also reflecting "a desire to leave a record of the distinctly ephemeral act of reading" (D'Addario, 87).

[7] See BL Add MS 15232; hereafter cited parenthetically by folio. The arms date from 1710-1714, while the manuscript was compiled in the 1580s. See Woudhuysen, 362-3; and 406-8 for a detailed analysis of the manuscript.

The Bright manuscript provides evidence of transformations of young readers into young writers as well. As Mary Ellen Lamb has argued, three holograph poems in the manuscript (12r-v), written and heavily revised by an inexpert italic hand, appear to be the work of a young woman; a new poet in the Sidney circle whose identity, Lamb concedes, is not likely to be recovered. There are suggestions, moreover, that this young woman's act of composition may be, in part, a product of pedagogy: the first line of the first poem is probably a *donnée,* provided to the writer to begin an exercise in versification, while all three poems show corrections in a mature, probably male, secretary hand (Lamb, 194-226).

The Bright manuscript is one of three extant manuscript copies of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella,* all emanating from the Harington circle, and the text is generally thought to be the most accurate version of the twenty-six poems from the sequence that it contains (Ringler, 538-9). Yet, as Lamb has argued, the young female author adding her poems to those of her celebrated predecessor was "able to write according to the aesthetic of Sidney and Shakespeare, [but] actively discarded it for the aesthetic of Turberville and Googe" (206-7). The works of this young poet are didactic and morally instructive in sense and purpose. They reflect, I maintain, a pedagogical approach to literary legacies, one inflected by gender, surely; exercises that merge literate pleasures with the hard work of learning to read and write. In the Montagu archive, the manuscript page is a classroom, where children learn the material practices of writing, and encounters with the soul of the text occur by means of its body.

The Hill Manuscript provides additional cases of the transformation of young readers into writers.[8] On the second folio, the signature, "R Montague"—Ralph, Elizabeth Montagu's great grandson, born in 1638—appears written vertically in the middle of the page in a childish hand. A primary source for the poetry of Wyatt and Surrey, the manuscript may

[8] BL Add MS 36529, hereafter cited parenthetically by folio.

have emerged from the household of Elizabeth Montagu's brother James Harington of Ridlington: the dominant secretary hand in Hill "very closely resembles" that exhibited in a manuscript of metrical translations of the Psalms which bears the signature, "Iames Harington" on the fly-leaf.[9] The Hill manuscript stands in a dependent relationship to the Arundel Harington manuscript, a 228-folio anthology of works by John Harington of Stepney, his son Sir John Harington (courtier-poet and translator of Ariosto), and illustrious members of their circles.[10] If Ralph Montagu's childish signature marks his passage as a reader and an accidental writer through the manuscript, two other signatures, "ffrancis Harryington" and "Ellina Harrington" (29v), belong to children whose literate skills were more honed and whose texts were more deliberate. Thirteen poems by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey are transcribed by Sir John Harington's daughters Ellina and Frances, the grand-nieces of Elizabeth Montagu.[11]

An "inexperienced amanuensis," as Hughey calls her, Ellina was given the task of copying Surrey's metrical paraphrases of Ecclesiastes (58v-62v) from the script in the Arundel manuscript (Hughey, 1960, 2:113). "Salamon Davids sonne," Ellina writes, "Kinge of Ierusalem Chosen by god to teache the Iewes . . . / Confesse vnder the Sonne/ that every thing is vayne" (Hill 58v). Solomon's foundational role as a teacher once again places his texts at the center of Puritan pedagogy: copying Solomon's words, Ellina learns that as "Adams Children [we] draw toward our decaye / Our Children fill our place awhyle/ and then

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[9] OSU Spec Rare MS Eng. 19. Hughey (1960), 1:41n50, attributes the hand to James Harington of Ridlington (d. 1613) based on its "old-fashioned character."

[10]Duke of Norfolk, Arundel HrJ337; ed. Hughey (1960). Subsequent citations are to Hughey's edition by folio.

[11] Frances (b. 1584) and Ellina (or Helena) (b. 1591) were the daughters of Sir John Harington.

they fade awaye" (lines 5-8). The young writer scripting this *memento mori* is engaged "in a kind of exercise" in transcription, or perhaps in "a dictation exercise," a spelling bee of words derived from the Word (Hughey, 1934/5, 413n3).[12] Ellina's corrections of the script indicate that she consulted the Arundel text—either while copying or after the dictation was finished—and changed the Hill text to conform to the source. The Hill manuscript thus represents, at least in part, a school copybook; one where the Harington children, through practice and knowledge, absorb the religious and cultural values of their elders as literary cultures, as they learn to read and write.

Ellina's reading and rewriting of Ecclesiastes was an engagement not only with Solomon but also with Surrey, a supporter of Protestantism who could be claimed as an early martyr for the true faith. Frances's writing lesson in the Hill manuscript, accordingly, consists of Surrey's four metrical paraphrases of and two verse prologues to the Psalms (62v-65v). It is possible that Elizabeth Montagu's brother James, whose hand figures prominently in the manuscript, may have overseen Frances's transcription. If so, the paraphrases allude not only to Surrey but also to the translations of the Psalms by James's cousins, Sir Philip Sidney and Mary Sidney Herbert.[13] In the Hill transcription, the short sequence ends with Psalm 55, Surrey's most profound expression of despair during his final imprisonment. Surrey's internalization of David's desolation is poignant and moving:

> Care pearceth my entrayles, and traveileth my spirit
> the greeslye feare of death, envyroneth my brest
> A tremblinge colde of dread, cleane overwhealm'the my hart
> thinck I, had I winges lyke to the symple dove

[12] Hughey (1934/5) identifies Francis and Ellina as Sir John's younger siblings, a view she corrects in Hughey (1960).

[13] Lucy Sidney, James Harington's mother, was Philip and Mary Sidney's aunt.

this perill might I flye, and seeke some place of rest. (1:131, ll. 4-9)

Rough and unpolished, the poem leaves its last lines untranslated: "but in the other psalme of david fynd I ease / Iacta curam tuam super dum et ipse te enutriet. id est / cast thie care vppon the Lord and he shall norishe thee" (1:132, ll. 47-9). Frances's youthful transcription suggests that she was not competent in Latin, and that she may not have understood the sense of the poem more broadly. Her tutor, perhaps James Harington, has corrected her many errors; a direct instructional intervention that was unnecessary in the case of Ellina's transcription of Ecclesiastes. Hughey speculates that Frances was "given the exercise of copying this poem from an original in so rough a state that it was difficult to decipher" (2:108). The obfuscation of form and content meant that the tutor's instruction was essential to the success or failure of this pedagogical exercise. Unable to cope with the linguistic aspects of the verse, it is easy to imagine that the child Frances could not have understood the depths of emotion in the piece.

While Frances's hand is absent from the Arundel manuscript, Ellina's appears twice. On folio 16v, she scripts in secretary a sestet rehearsing the proverbial wisdom concerning a man's the choice of a wife: "The good and evill fortune of all a mans liff / Consistesth in Choise of his good or <ba> evill wif" (ll. 1-2). Several features of this otherwise mundane entry are worth noting. The poem is the first of a pair. It is immediately followed by a sestet that applies the observation to a woman's choice of husband: "the good and bad hap that some women haue had / haue stand ^in the Choise of good housband or bad" (ll. 1-2). Ellina's slip of the pen, writing "ba[d]" for "evill" in the first poem, seems slight. Yet it becomes meaningful in light of the second sestet, where husbands are consistently "bad"—that is, poor stewards—rather than "evill." Not so much a slip of the pen as a change of mind occurs in the penultimate line of the second poem. The closing couplet reads:

who lives w^ith^ housband in <Iarrs> ^anger^ and in awe
in yokes not evin payred vneaselie do drawe. (ll. 5-6)

Ellina departs from the poem's meter to make the change from "Iarrs" to "anger," subtly shifting the responsibility for domestic strife from mutual disputes to an anger that resides solely in the wife. These two unassuming poems gain greater significance, and greater mystery, when Ellina crosses them out and rewrites them with minor changes on the next folio (17v). The most intriguing emendation occurs again in the closing couplet of the second poem:

> Who lives wth bad howsband in <feare> ^{anger} & <in> awe
> in yokes not euen payred vneaselie do[th]e drawe. (ll. 5-6)

This elision of wifely fear of her husband again, and more forcefully, shifts responsibility from the threatening husband to the ill-tempered wife.

These companion pieces that meditate on companionate coupling in both metrical and marital terms are unattributed: "Some one," Hughey comments, "perhaps a Harington, has put into verse" this proverbial wisdom (2:10). It is certainly possible that the first, cancelled drafts of these poems represent Ellina's initial attempt to copy a text given to her. Like the scriptures of Solomon assigned to the Harington daughters as writing exercises, advice on the choice of a wife was a staple of early modern paternal teaching. It thus seems appropriate that Ellina would practice her writing skills while imbibing this instructional commonplace; more so, given the addition of a second poem on a woman's choice of a husband. Yet the subtle changes in the language of these revisions—indeed, the fact of their erasure and rewriting a page later—register Ellina's active engagement with the gendering of the subject matter, whether as a resistant pupil or more likely, I argue, as a young woman and a young poet making her way through the tangled lines of wifely unease and uneven yokes; of marital innocence and blame, from jars, to fear, to anger.

The Montagu archive offers tantalizing suggestions of women's literate practices, and imply their teaching of sons and daughters. Three extant letters to Elizabeth Montagu from

her sister Mabel Noel attest to the highly literate Sidney-Harington household in which this generation of Montagu women was raised (NRO Montagu MS B2; and NRO Montagu MS 191, loose sheets). Lady Montagu's will, as well as her correspondence, suggests her care for and training of young women in her home, most prominently Paulina Pepys, her maidservant, witness to her will, and future wife of Lady Montagu's youngest son, Sidney (426r-v). Ann Montagu's "Catechisme" reminds us that mothers usually bore responsibility for children's alphabetic literacy, as their sons and daughters learned the core beliefs of Protestantism along with their ABCs. Given the anonymity of many of the poems in the Hill, Bright, and Arundel manuscripts, however, we can only speculate as to women's participation in the pedagogical project attending these works. Certainly the powerful model of the Sidney women as authors and patrons would have influenced their female kin; thus we may imagine that Elizabeth Harington, like her brother James, instructed her grand-nieces in the arts of reading and writing. Yet if the Montagu, Harington, and Sidney women contributed works to the miscellanies through which their offspring entered both spiritual and literary cultures, their authorship is remarkable in its absence. Seven of Mary Sidney Herbert's translations of the Psalms were once copied on the now-missing folios 120-7 of the Arundel manuscript. While they must have been known to the Harington daughters, they passed from the immediate, familial to public readership, first in manuscript circulation and, in 1775, in print (Hughey, 1960, 1:25). An autograph letter from the Countess of Pembroke to her daughter-in-law Barbara was tipped into the Bright manuscript in the nineteenth century, probably to argue that the volume originated at Wilton House, but the countess's hand is otherwise not present (Ringler, 538-9).

Yet the ghostly remainders of women's passage through these texts—as well as their passage *of* them from sister to brother, mother to daughter, kin to kin—sometimes rise to the surface and take shape in the words they write. In these quite literal palimpsests, the

figurative trace of maternal teaching lies behind the reader's and writer's involvement with the material practices of literacy. Recalling the imbrication of maternal teaching with the material body invites us to see an alternative literacy behind the advanced instruction of fathers and tutors; a literacy other than alphabetic, one that acknowledges the mind's inevitable involvement with the body; the marriage of knowledge and practice. On the final page of the Hill manuscript, beneath an account of the "gilt words" spoken by Puritan Edward Dering on his deathbed, the words that end this book of gold come from Ellina. She signs her name in clear italics, not as the writer of this passage, but as a reader (82v); or rather, as both reader and writer, able to leave the material legacy of her transient passage through this scene to hear the last words of this lost saint. Reading—for Elizabeth Montagu, for Ann Montagu, and for Ellina and Frances Harington—joins disembodied knowledge with embodied practice; a potent coupling that joins body to soul, and pen to script. In this site rooted in matter, the godly comes to know herself. In this last gesture of fellowship, inclusion, and possession, Ellina witnesses her educated awareness of membership in the society of saints.

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